

Senators do have those individual rights, and, boy, we have seen individual rights being used today and yesterday and the day before. Those are the rules of the Senate.

But again, I plea that people respect this process and be reasonable and allow these nominations to be considered and taken up in a way which allows us to act on these deserving people in a reasonable way—a way that would allow us to proceed with our constitutional duties.

The Senate has to approve these individuals with advice and consent. We can't give advice and consent if there is this wholesale obstruction.

Again, I wanted to make sure everybody is heard in the nomination process. But the obstruction of not being able to consider them is unreasonable.

With all that said—I said I wasn't going to rehash the why's—I am very disturbed by the process and disappointed by Senate colleagues.

With that said, we will return in November. I hope that once past the election—if that is why there is this wholesale hostage holding, if that is why it is, once we get past the election being settled—we will be able to focus our attention on the calendar.

I hope we can return to the regular order and allow the Senate to act on these nominees. These are people who believe in public service. I believe public service and their consideration of public service is a noble cause. Let's not leave them on hold indefinitely. Many of them are listening to the fact that they will not get through to me right now.

COLUMBUS DAY

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today is Columbus Day. When we look back on the history of Columbus Day and the history in this body, it was October 12 of 1492, the sailor onboard the Pinta landed, and the next day Christopher Columbus and his three ships landed at the Bahamian Island, ending a nearly 10-week journey across the Atlantic.

Today, as we have been working here all day, people have been celebrating Columbus Day all over the United States. It is the day to honor Christopher Columbus's sense of bravery, his curiosity, his dream in making that dream come true, all of which are concepts that are still very much alive and well today in the spirit of Americans.

The first recorded celebration of Columbus Day took place on October 12, 1792. That was to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Columbus's landing. A century later, the first official celebration occurred when President Benjamin Harrison issued a proclamation urging Americans to mark the day. And over the next decades, the Knights of Columbus, a Roman Catholic fraternal order, lobbied State legislatures to declare October 12 an official holiday. Colorado was the first to do so in 1907, followed by New York in 1909. The Federal Government declared Columbus Day an official holiday in 1971.

As we have been working today and as we bring things to a close, we see all of the country marching in parades in our cities and towns, coming together to enjoy families and friends. When I finish, I will celebrate the birthday of my son, which has been put on hold until we adjourn, which will be shortly. It causes us to reflect a little bit about dreaming, curiosity, of the bravery that took place over 500 years ago.

SPACESHIPONE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, last week, *SpaceShipOne* completed its third successful flight into space. Burt Rutan, Brian Binnie, Michael Melvill, and their colleagues on the Tier One Project team deserve a place on the honor roll of our Nation's greatest explorers and innovators. Their bravery, ingenuity, and hard work have launched the age of commercial space flight. I also commend the men and women who had the vision to establish the Ansari X Prize. They all had dreams—and they, with American spirit, captured their dream.

America has always been on the cutting edge of space travel. We landed the first people on the moon, performed the first docking in space, made the first successful soft landings on Mars, and built the world's first fleet of reusable spacecraft. We have explored eight of the nine planets and returned a treasure trove of information about our moon, asteroids, and comets.

As I speak, our spacecraft beam back scientific data from Mars, Saturn, and the orbit of our own planet. Soon, a spacecraft will begin to send data from Mercury and another will return from a close encounter with a comet.

Through NASA's Discovery Program, universities and research labs work in partnership with Washington policy makers to return valuable information about asteroids and our sun. And last, but not least, we have spearheaded the 16-nation effort to build and crew the International Space Station.

America will continue to push the outer reaches of space exploration. We will return the space shuttle to flight, finish the International Space Station, continue our efforts to explore the Moon, Mars, comets, asteroids, and outer planets. We will also send more humans into space. In doing this, we will achieve the President's goal to "extend human presence across the solar system."

The successful launch of *SpaceShipOne* shows that the private sector can achieve spectacular successes. In the future, entrepreneurs will launch many of the routine spaceflight activities in low earth orbit.

In time, privately financed, privately directed innovators will press forward with the exploration of the Moon and Mars. Space offers extraordinary potential for commerce and adventure, for new innovations and new tests of will. As Americans, we can't help but

reach for the stars. It's our nature. It's our destiny.

The President's Centennial Challenges program encourages the private sector's efforts to fulfill this dream. His program is providing incentives for inventors and entrepreneurs to develop less expensive spacecraft, improve robotic technology, and encourage future astronauts.

The President supports a vigorous role for government in exploring places beyond our planet. He believes in the promise of space exploration. And he believes, as I do, that, in time, private citizens and entrepreneurs will lead humankind to the stars.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES—S. 2845

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the order of October 10, the Chair appoints the following conferees on S. 2845:

The Presiding Officer (Mr. SESSIONS) appointed Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LOTT, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. GRAHAM of Florida, and Mr. LAUTENBERG conferees on the part of the Senate.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2004

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment under the provisions of H. Con. Res. 518 until 12 o'clock noon on Tuesday, November 16; I further ask that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and there then be a period of morning business until the hour of 12:30, with Senators to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

I further ask consent that the Senate recess from the hours of 12:30 to 2:15 for the weekly policy luncheon; provided further that at 2:15 the Senate begin executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 915, Francis Harvey, to be Secretary of the Army as provided under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, in a moment we will be adjourning until November 16. As always, the adjournment resolution provides for both Houses of Congress to be called back into session if the public interest shall warrant it. If it were necessary for the Senate to reconvene prior to this November 16 date, certainly Senators would be given ample time to make arrangements.

If not called back, we would reconvene on that Tuesday, November 16. During that week, the Senate will try